

# Town & City

MANAGEMENT LIMITED



Pictured Above: TCML Head Office in Darlington

## Winter Newsletter 2011

### STAFF UPDATES

It is with great pleasure to announce Martin Baker has become a Director of Town & City, he joins Sue Crosier and Mike Willans as Directors. Martin is responsible for the smooth running of all three offices and is currently educating himself for a future in property management.



Pictured Left to Right: Martin Baker, Peter Bigge, Mike Willans & Sue Crosier

**Jim Eccleston** has also recently joined Town & City as Office Accountant. Jim has over 30 years experience and has an extensive knowledge of accounts and has achieved MAAT status. Jim is looking forward to the challenges this role will bring.

### STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

At Town & City we are committed to providing our staff with the opportunity to develop their skills and we are currently undertaking a staff training programme. All staff are encouraged and supported in achieving their goals therefore giving our staff a greater knowledge and understanding of property management and the systems we use.

### BUPA GREAT NORTH RUN

Mike Willans completed the BUPA Great North Run in September and raised £311 for his chosen charity Children with Cancer. All the staff at Town & City are proud of Mike's achievement.

### MAKING CHANGES TO YOUR PROPERTY

Town & City would like to remind all leaseholders to please consult their lease before making any changes to their property. The lease is a legal document and must be adhered to at all times. If you are unsure of the legal requirements within your lease or have any questions please contact Town & City who will be able to point you in the right direction.

### COMMUNICATION

Communication is one of the most important aspects of our business therefore we have put together a key contact list for Town & City.

### KEY CONTACTS AT TOWN & CITY

#### Directors Office

**Peter Bigge – Managing Director**

**Tel:** 01325 389 689, Option 5

**E-mail:** peter@townandcity.com

**Sue Crosier – Director**

**Tel:** 01325 389 689, Option 5

**E-mail:** susan@townandcity.com

**Mike Willans – Director**

**Tel:** 0113 251 5044, Option 5

**Email:** mike@townandcity.com

**Martin Baker – Director**

**Tel:** 01325 389 689, Option 5

**Email:** martinbaker@townandcity.com

**Joanne Hanson – Executive PA to the Directors**

**Tel:** 01325 389 689, Option 5

**E-mail:** joanne@townandcity.com

**Susan Ramsay – PA/Legal**

**Tel:** 01325 389 689, Option 5

**Email:** Susan.Ramsay@townandcity.com

#### Maintenance

**Shaun Kernon – Head of Maintenance**

**Tel:** 01325 389 689, Option 1

**E-mail:** shaunkernon@townandcity.com

**Sue Williamson – Maintenance Admin Assistant**

**Tel:** 01325 389 689, Option 1

**E-mail:** susanwilliamson@townandcity.com

**Dawn Tinkler – Maintenance Admin Assistant**

**Tel:** 01325 389 689, Option 1

**E-mail:** dawn@townandcity.com

#### Accounts

**Rachael Hartnett – Accounts Manager**

**Tel:** 01325 389 689, Option 2

**E-mail:** rachael@townandcity.com

**Sylvia Dawson – Credit Controller**

**Tel:** 01325 389 689, Option 4

**E-mail:** Sylvia@townandcity.com

**Margaret Flowers – Supplier Accounts Administrator**

**Tel:** 01325 389 689, Option 3

**E-mail:** margaret@townandcity.com

## INTERNET STANDING ORDER

If you are considering setting up your standing order for payment of service charge using internet banking please be aware of the following:

- The first payment is usually a different amount from the rest
- The standing order is for a set number of payments
- Your property reference **ONLY** should be quoted in the reference section. If the reference is too long it will not show on our statement. Your property reference is normally four or five letters and two numbers with no space. If no reference appears on a payment we cannot identify who it belongs to
- Once the standing order has started please check your statement to ensure that it is working as you had arranged, this will avoid missed payments

## CALL FOR LEGAL REGULATION OF PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SECTOR

Peter Bigge recently wrote to Business Secretary Vince Cable asking the Government to consider regulating the property management industry. Peter pointed out that anyone can set themselves up in the property management business. This can result in unscrupulous property managers overcharging, levying unexpected fee increases, failing to explain how the service charges are broken down and falling foul of complicated property legislation through a lack of necessary knowledge.

It is estimated that there are more than 1.8 million private leasehold flats in England and Wales.

Peter estimates that residents run the risk of paying out up to 50% a year unnecessarily if their properties are not managed properly. This industry is no place for novices as the management of long leasehold residential property is complex.

It requires an in-depth understanding of the structure and meaning of leases and a thorough knowledge of the statutory requirements of various landlord and tenant legislation. For instance, there are at least six key Acts of Parliament along with scores of regulations that impact on this sector.

## GAS REGULATIONS – DECEMBER 2012

The New Gas Regulations come in force from the 31st December 2012.

Gas Safe registered engineers need to be able to see the flue which takes fumes away from the boiler as part of essential safety checks whenever the boiler is worked on. A flue that is in poor condition as well as a boiler not working properly, could put you or your family or a tenant in danger from carbon monoxide poisoning, which can cause serious injury or death.

If the boiler is fitted on an outside wall, it is unlikely you have this type of flue. Alternatively, if your engineer can see all of the flue you will not need to take any further action in relation to this matter.

If however you have a boiler where all, or part of, the flue cannot be seen, you will need to arrange for inspection hatches to be fitted. This does not mean that your flue system is suddenly unsafe. As long as the boiler passes a series of safety checks including having audible carbon monoxide alarms fitted it can be used normally for the time being.



**Town & City Management Limited**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor North Point  
Faverdale North  
Darlington DL3 0PH

Carbon Monoxide alarms are not an alternative to being able to see the flue and you will still need to have inspection hatches fitted as per the date mentioned. From the 31st January 2013, any Gas Safe Registered engineer will turn the boiler off and formally advise you not to use it until inspection hatches have been fitted in appropriate places.

## WINTER WEATHER

It doesn't seem long ago since the heavy snow falls of winter 2010 and the freezing temperatures. Please see below tips on clearing the snow taken from [www.direct.gov](http://www.direct.gov).

## TIPS ON CLEARING SNOW AND ICE FROM PAVEMENTS OR PUBLIC SPACES

If you clear snow and ice yourself, be careful - don't make the pathways more dangerous by causing them to refreeze. But don't be put off clearing paths because you're afraid someone will get injured.

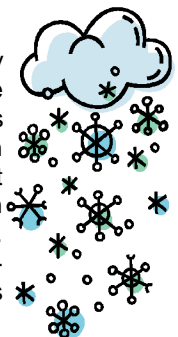
Remember, people walking on snow and ice have a responsibility to be careful themselves.

### Clear the snow or ice early in the day

It's easier to move fresh, loose snow rather than hard snow that has packed together from people walking on it. So if possible, start removing the snow and ice in the morning. If you remove the top layer of snow in the morning, any sunshine during the day will help melt any ice beneath. You can then cover the path with salt before nightfall to stop it refreezing overnight.

### Use salt - not water

If you use water to melt the snow, it may refreeze and turn to black ice. Black ice increases the risk of injuries as it is invisible and very slippery. You can prevent black ice by spreading some salt on the area you have cleared. You can use ordinary table or dishwasher salt. Don't use the salt found in salting bins - this will be needed to keep the roads clear.



### Offer to clear your neighbours' paths

If your neighbour will have difficulty getting in and out of their home, offer to clear snow and ice around their property as well. Check that any elderly or disabled neighbours are alright in the cold weather. If you're worried about them, contact your local council.

## CHRISTMAS

Over the Christmas period our offices will close from 12 Noon on Thursday 22 December 2011 and will re-open at 9.00 am on Wednesday 28 December 2011. Our offices will also close on Friday 30 December 2011 at 5.00 pm and re-open on Tuesday 3 January 2012 at 9.00 am.



***The Town & City Team would like to wish all Leaseholders and Directors a very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year!***



**01325 389 689**



**mail@townandcity.com**



**www.townandcity.com**